Representatives voted upon the bill and approved it with a margin of 359-68 votes. Under section 4(a) (2), this Act provides for cessation of the waiver if India engages in activities other than those from which it is exempt under Section 129 of the US Atomic Energy Act.

(b) It is the Government's position that the guiding principle for the resumption of civilian nuclear energy cooperation with the United States must remain the framework of the 18 July Joint Statement and India's Separation Plan. India is committed to continuing its unilateral voluntary moratorium on nuclear testing reiterated in the 18 July Joint Statement.

Indo-US Nuclear agreement

1074. SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Legislation passed by the US Congress regarding Indo-US nuclear agreement are in contravention to the Prime Ministerial assurance given to this House;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Nuclear Community in the country expressing certain doubts about the future impact of complete dependence on fuel supply for our energy security; and

(c) if so, the response of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ANAND SHARMA): (a) The US congress is yet to pass the final legislation that would facilitate civil nuclear energy cooperation between India and the United State. The US house of Representatives voted on a Bill on 26 July 2006 and the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee on a draft Senate Bill on 29 June 2006. It would be premature to pass judgement on the legislation until its final text is known.

(b) and (c) Expansion of nuclear power capacity will be an important aspect of energy security and the country's 3-Stage Nuclear Power Programme provides that the larger fraction of nuclear energy in the long run would be derived from fuel sources available within the country through Fast Reactors and through use of thorium. Nuclear power capacity set-up through international civil nuclear cooperation is to be viewed as additionally to our domestic programme. With regard to supply of fuel for thermal reactors that would be offered to be placed under India-specific IAEA

safeguards as envisaged in the separation plan tabled in the Parliament, following multilayered assurances have been incorporated:

The United States has conveyed its commitment to the reliable supply of fuel to India. Consistent with the July 18, 2005, Joint Statement, the United States has also reaffirmed its assurance to create the necessary conditions for India to have assured and full access to fuel for its reactors. As part of its implementation of the July 18, 2005 Joint Statement the United States is committed to seeking agreement from the U.S. Congress to amend its domestic laws and to work with friends and allies to adjust the practices of the Nuclear Suppliers Group to create the Necessary conditions for India to obtain full access to the international fuel market, including reliable, uninterrupted and continual access to fuel supplies from firms in several nations.

To further guard against any disruption of fuel supplies, the United States is prepared to take the following additional Steps;

(i) The United States is willing to incorporate assurances regarding fuel supply in the bilateral U.S. — India agreement on peaceful uses of nuclear energy under Section 123 of the U.S. Atomic Energy Act, which would be submitted to the U.S. Congress.

(ii) The United States will join India in seeking to negotiate with the IAEA an India-specific fuel supply agreement.

(iii) The United States will support and Indian effort to develop a strategic reserve of nuclear fuel to guard against any disruption of supply over the lifetime of India's reactors.

(iv) If despite these arrangements, a disruption of fuel supplies to India occurs, the United States and India would jointly convene a group of friendly supplier countries to include countries such as Russia, France and the United Kingdom to pursure such measures as would restore fuel supply to India.

In light of the above understandigns with the United States, an India-specific safeguards agreement will be negotiated between India and the IAEA providing for safeguards to guard against withdrawal of safeguarded nuclear material from civilian use at the time as well as providing for corrective measures that India may take to ensure uninterrupted operation of its civilian nuclear reactors in the event of disruption of foreign fuel supplies.

The Government is committed to preserving autonomy of our Resarch & Development activities in the nuclear field as well as integrity of our Three-Stage Nuclear Programme.

Indian and Pakistani Prisoners

1075. SHRI DARA SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indian and Pakistani prisoners currently held captive in the jails of the respective countries, category-wise;

(b) the number of prisoners released by the two countries during the last two years, till date;

(c) the number of Indian fishermen held illegally in Pakistan;

(d) the steps taken by Government to release POWs/fishermen/military and civilians from Pakistani jails till date;

(e) whether Government have any proposal to cover Indian fishermen fishing in territorial waters under an insurance scheme; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNALAFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) According to information available, 136 Indian civilian prisoners, 412 fishermen and 74 POWs are in Pakistani jails. However, Pakistan Government does not acknowledge presence of any Indian POWs in its jails. The information pertaining to the number of Pakistani civilian prisoners is being obtained from the authorities concerned. There are no Pakistani POWs in Indian jails.

(b) In 2005, Pakistan released 1171 Indian fishermen and 125 civilian prisoners. In 2006,73 fishermen and 19 Indian prisoners have so far been released. In 2005, India released 222 Pakistani fishermen and 159 civilian prisoners. In 2006, India has released 60 Pakistani civilian prisoners and 59 fishermen so far.

(c) There are 412 Indian fishermen held in custody in Pakistan.

(d) Government has been consistently taking up the matter of release of Indian prisoners with Pakistan Government at various levels. The two countries reached an understanding at the Home Secretary level talks on May 30-31 2006 in Islamabad under which both sides agreed that fishermen and civilian prisoners, who have completed their prison sentences and